

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-1) expressed serious concern today as he questioned Defense Department (DoD) officials in the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) hearing on the “Efficiency Initiative” abruptly announced by Secretary Robert Gates on August 9, 2010, which included the proposed closure of Joint Forces Command and an across-the-board cut of the contractor workforce. After continual pressure for seven weeks by the Virginia delegation, including a meeting yesterday at the Pentagon, DoD’s failure to provide any information to the Members or to the public continues.

DoD officials appearing before the Committee today included William J. Lynn III, Deputy Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics and General James E. Cartwright, USMC, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

“The continued failure to provide any substantive, thoughtful analysis on a decision of this magnitude is disturbing,” Wittman said. “After yesterday’s disappointment from our meeting at the Pentagon, today’s discussion continued the trend of the tremendous lack of transparency from DoD on this ‘efficiency initiative.’”

When asked by Congressman Wittman to describe any precedent for a decision at DoD where the decision was made and announced without full analysis, including cost savings and a completed implementation plan, Secretary Lynn failed to provide any circumstances where this has previously occurred. ( [click here to view Wittman’s questioning](#) )

Wittman continued, “The security of this nation should not rely upon an approach that puts the cart before the horse. This calls into question the process at the Pentagon by which national security decisions are made. I will continue to press the Pentagon for answers, not only for Virginians directly affected by this decision, but for all Americans, for the lack of foresight, transparency and accountability by this Administration. Decision-makers and leaders in this country must be held to a higher standard, especially when the security of this country is at the heart of the issue.”

*Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He serves on the Natural Resources Committee and the Armed Services Committee where he is the Ranking Member of*

*the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.*